

IMPRESSIONS OF AMBLESIDE STUDENTS FROM A HUSBAND'S POINT OF VIEW.

DEAR EDITOR,

As the husband of an ex-student, and having had the good fortune of meeting many of those who have gone through the training at Ambleside, I hope you will allow me a space in which to reply to a letter published in your last number, as it seems to be a severe criticism, at any rate in my humble opinion.

My remarks may aptly be termed "Impressions of Ambleside Students by the Husband of One of Them."

They are very pleasant impressions. The training has given all a genuine love of teaching, together with a pride in their calling, tempered by an altruistic love for those about them.

The individuality is very diverse in the students I have met, but the same principles seemed deeply engrained in all.

I will take the points raised in the order in which they appear in the letter.

All the students I know not only read the "Parents' Review," but discuss it with one another and with those parents whom they meet. There are doubtless some, however, who, when they are free from work and the continuous study of educational subjects, require change of thought, lighter reading, and a different occupation; indeed it is a recognised tenet of the P.N.E.U. that we all require change of thought.

"A" is required and refuses to stay in the class-room after actual lesson hours are over, and is generally selfish; still one would like to know how long "A" was expected to stay in the schoolroom after lesson hours, and what the lesson hours were. If you will turn back you will find an article in the same number on "Resident Governesses" reprinted from the "Parents' Review" from which I quote:—"The strain on the nerves which results from the constant

society of several children healthily noisy is a strain so great that only a girl with good health can decide to face it, but whether the governess be slightly delicate or very strong some degree of nervous fatigue is inevitable, and necessitates rest and frequent outings, which it is well to arrange at the time of entering upon an engagement."

There was evidently an unusual lack of sympathy between "B" and her employer, or surely the P. R. School and other educational topics would have been discussed. Here, again, one would like to know both sides of the question.

My remarks with regard to reading the P.R. and the necessity of change of thought and occupation would apply to the third case mentioned. To quote again from the article mentioned before: "Some leisure must needs be utilised in writing letters, mending clothes, &c." Indeed writing letters appears to me to be one of the social duties; though my experience of students has been that they have what almost amounts to a passion for acquiring knowledge and self-culture.

The fourth case must be an extraordinary exception to those I know. It has always struck me that their interest in and enthusiasm for Nature, and the joy in sharing these with others, is one of their strongest points. Indeed, I could name one at least who has given up well-earned holidays in order to awaken these interests in children of the poorer classes who, only by her sacrifice, could have had this golden opportunity.

In dress I have always remarked those students I know to be staid and neat. Indeed, from a man's point of view, I could occasionally well do with a little more smartness. The remark of the young woman, "I think it best to leave finery to the servants," seems to me not only bad taste but unjust, as servants do not all overdress. They, too, in many instances are becoming better educated, and I for one could not permit my maids to be included in the class referred to, but perhaps that is explained by their having a good mistress, who has been a student at the House of Education.

Yours sincerely,

A HUSBAND.